

# State Senator • Irma Clark-Coleman

*Serving the 3rd District Constituents in Detroit, Dearborn & River Rouge*

## Dearborn Passes Millage Renewal

Congratulations to Dearborn residents for the continuous support of their children! On August 3, Dearborn residents voted to renew a millage in support of their public schools. The Hold Harmless millage is expected to generate \$55 million, which amounts to about one-third of the school district's annual budget.

In 1994, the passage of Proposal A created a new method for funding schools. Under the new system, districts that were

spending more than \$6,500 per pupil were allowed to ask local voters to approve additional mills in order to maintain their level of funding. Dearborn is among those districts.

The millage will be active for 10 years. More than 80 percent of the revenue from the Hold Harmless millage will come from the business community with the remaining amounts being paid by Dearborn residents.

The Hold Harmless millage is a 6-mill renewal for homes and an 18-mill renewal for businesses.

## How to Contact Me

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*Four Tops Day: Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman (first on left) pays tribute to The Four Tops during a special presentation at the State Capitol declaring May 26, 2004, as Four Tops Day. Abdul "Duke" Fakir (center), Renaldo "Obie" Benson (far right) and Levi Stubbs (seated) received accolades from the Senator. Stubbs' wife, Clineice, (second from left) and Yone Payton (second from right), widow of original group member Lawrence Payton, joined the Motown hit makers for the ceremony in Senate Chambers.*

# A Note From Senator Irma Clark-Coleman



*Dear Constituent:*

*Our state faces several challenges as we work toward balancing the budget for FY 2005. Legislators and Governor Granholm have been meeting over the summer to finalize the budget that will eliminate the projected deficit through cost-cutting and revenue stream measures.*

*While controlling costs, we must maintain public programs meant to help citizens who need a boost. I will continue to represent you and your interests. I believe that if we meet the needs of the least of us, the entire state will benefit.*

*At this writing, lawmakers have already taken some steps to balance the budget and fill funding gaps. For instance, we have increased taxes on cigarettes to fund Medicaid spending and we've increased the tax on casinos to help fill the overall state budget shortfall. I am confident the legislature will balance the budget as it did for FY 2004. As the state economy rolls to recovery, this process should run smoother.*

*As always, I urge you to educate yourselves politically and to participate in the process. If you have any questions or issues in your neighborhood, please contact my office.*

*Irma Clark-Coleman*

**Irma Clark-Coleman**  
State Senator • 3rd District

## Lighthouse Opens to Fanfare

Senator Clark-Coleman joined River Rouge Mayor Greg P. Joseph and other officials to dedicate Mariners' Memorial Lighthouse, the state's newest beacon. Dozens of residents and Lighthouse enthusiasts gathered in Belanger Park to celebrate River Rouge's role in Michigan's Maritime history.

The River Rouge High School Marching Band and River Rouge Concert choir provided special music for the occasion. The 41-foot new construction is a United States Coast Guard certified navigational guide on the Detroit River.

The Detroit River is one of 14 American Heritage rivers in the country. It was declared a public highway in December 1819.

## Clark-Coleman Appointed to Cherry Commission

Governor Jennifer Granholm appointed Senator Clark-Coleman to the Cherry Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth. The Commission is charged with finding ways to double the percentage of Michigan citizens who earn college degrees.

Headed by Lt. Governor John Cherry, the Commission boasts 40 of the top education advocates in the state. Senator Clark-Coleman, Minority Vice Chair of the Senate Education committee, is a former member of the elected Detroit Board of Education and currently sits on the National Education Commission.

"I accept the Governor's charge and will use all of my knowledge and experience to increase the number of our state college graduates," Senator Clark-Coleman said. "There are some wonderful people on the commission and I'm sure that, as a group, we can get the job done."

The Commission held its first organizational meeting on Wednesday, July 14. In September, the Commission will hold statewide hearings on the issue.





# Students Keep City Tradition of Clean Streets

This past spring, students of the American Islamic Academy joined members of the City Beautiful Commission and area residents in the annual “Clean Up” parade held at various locations around Dearborn.

Under the 52-year-old tradition, every community holds its own parade and hosts its own Grand Marshall. “The ‘Clean Up’ parades teach students about community pride, cleanliness, and respect for the environment,” said Dearborn Mayor Michael A. Guido. “Keeping Dearborn beautiful should be the goal of every Dearborn resident, no matter what age,” he added.

If you didn’t get a chance to join the children and those who care about Dearborn, mark your calendars for next May. Senator Clark-Coleman hopes to see you there.



*Sen. Clark-Coleman joins students from the American Islamic Academy as they support Dearborn Mayor Michael A. Guido’s efforts to keep Dearborn Clean.*

# Clark-Coleman Supports Community Health



*Sen. Clark-Coleman (center) is joined by (left to right) River Rouge EMS Director Keith Murray, Rev. Bill Smith, SEMCA Executive Director Jack O’Reilly, Kim Trent, River Rouge Commissioner Malcolm Moulton, and River Rouge Mayor Greg P. Joseph.*

Senator Clark-Coleman was recently on hand in River Rouge when the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) held its community health fair at the Beechwood Community Center. Called the “Healthy You” tour, the event was meant to introduce health resources such as HIV/AIDS intervention and testing, STD awareness, and health screening to area youth.

HIV is reported to be the fastest growing disease among African Americans ages 14-25. The Visiting Nurse Association administered OraQuick – a 20-minute HIV test – free of charge.

The all-day event was a collaborative effort by the SEMCA and the Tri-City Community Development Corporation. Other organizations in attendance included: Oakwood Healthcare System, Karmanos Cancer Institute, and the American Lung Association.

Senator Clark-Coleman believes that a healthy community is a viable community. “More health fairs of this nature should be held around the state,” she said. “Health awareness is the beginning of empowerment.”

# University of Michigan – Dearborn’s Visit

*Sen. Clark-Coleman greets visitors from the University of Michigan - Dearborn’s Professional Development curriculum. The professionals were on their first visit to the State Capitol.*





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**Irma Clark-Coleman**

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# Toll Program Toughens Lawmakers

Senator Clark-Coleman, the sole legislator from Michigan to be awarded a fellowship, joined 50 other lawmakers from across the country this past summer to hone their leadership skills at the prestigious Toll Fellowship program in Lexington, KY. With a focus on risk taking, confidence building, and personal satisfaction, the program is fully funded by the Council of State Governments, a national organization. The week-long experience grouped together Democrat and Republican public servants to explore how groups

communicate, identify and solve problems, make decisions, and resolve conflicts.

One component used by program facilitators included a rope challenge course at Ashley College grounds in Wilmore, KY. All participants were required to push themselves beyond their limits with the help of their colleagues, who during the entire program were encouraged to disregard their political affiliation. “There were Democrats helping Republicans and vice versa,” Clark-Coleman said. “In the end

we learned that with understanding we can work through any issue.” Senator Clark-Coleman found herself 100 feet in the air with a pulley and harness being the only way of making it to the ground. She first walked across a log and a tight rope before finally zooming across a pulley-drawn rope. As she zoomed across the rope guess who was waiting on the ground to help her recover? Senator Clark-Coleman won’t say, but it was another lawmaker who looked fear in the face and called the Senator friend.



*Facing Fear: Senator Clark-Coleman showed that she could handle any legislative debate after climbing 100 feet in the air and sliding down on a wire.*